



**CGA JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
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Support for: SB 280 AA REVISING THE PENALTY FOR CAPITAL FELONIES  
Comments submitted by Ellen W. McBride, Death Penalty Specialist, LWVCT**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut, (LWVCT) a statewide organization with over 1800 members appreciates the opportunity to comment upon the bills that are before the Committee. The League *strongly supports* SB 280.

The League believes that capital punishment should not be a sentencing option for murder or any other crime. A sentence of life imprisonment without the possibility of release is punishment that ensures public safety without raising the many complex problems associated with the death penalty. Until the death penalty in Connecticut is abolished, the League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports an immediate moratorium on executions.

The League has studied the issue of capital punishment and has concluded the following:

- The death penalty costs more than life imprisonment without parole. The General Assembly's Office of Fiscal Analysis estimated that the death penalty cost the state of Connecticut four million dollars a year to maintain.
- The death penalty causes additional harm to murder victim's families by subjecting them to years of media attention and replaying of the crime while appeals are made. This is not swift justice. The needs of these families are not met.
- Connecticut has convicted innocent people of murder. It takes years to undo such convictions if it can be done.
- The death penalty as a deterrent is not provable.
- The death penalty is not applied fairly and consistently without regard to race, gender, socio-economics or geography.

SB280 would abolish the death penalty and make life in prison without the possibility of release the maximum sentence. SB 280 would amend the general statutes to replace the death penalty with a penalty of life imprisonment without the possibility of release for certain murders committed on or after the effective date of the act. This would provide for prospective abolition of the death penalty. The League of Women Voters of Connecticut urges you to vote "YES" on this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important bill.